

**I. GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL  
OF THE CONSOLIDATION OR MERGER  
OF UNIVERSITIES**

The guidelines for the review and approval of the consolidation or merger of universities include two components:

1. Requirements Established by ACHE (See below)
2. Sequential Procedures (Attachment 1)

**Requirements Established by the Commission**

The following specific requirements must be addressed in merger or consolidation proposals:

1. Proposed program exchanges, duplications, or relocations among the merged or consolidated institutions must be clearly identified in the proposals.
2. Additional programs, i.e. programs not existing on one or more of the campuses at the time of the merger or consolidation, must undergo the regular ACHE review and approval process.
3. Documentation of specific educational benefits to be derived from the merger or consolidation must be presented with the Statement of Intent to Consolidate or Merge.
4. The merger or consolidation must be cost beneficial. Specifically, evidence must be presented that a reduction of administrative and other costs will result from the merger or consolidation. Both immediate and long-range savings must be presented.

Only those mergers or consolidations that are educationally and economically beneficial should be submitted to ACHE for consideration and approval.

Adopted 09/24/04

## Attachment 1

### **Sequential Procedures for the Merger or Consolidation of Universities**

#### I. Statement of Intent Phase

1. The proposing Board(s) of Trustees presents a Statement of Intent to Consolidate or Merge two or more institutions to ACHE for review, comment, and approval.
2. Institutional notification of pending change to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

#### II. Administrative Consolidation Phase

1. The proposing Board(s) of Trustees presents a formal request to ACHE for its approval of the administrative consolidation of the institutions.

#### III. Institutional (Programmatic) Consolidation or Merger Phase

1. Preparation and submission of Prospectus for Substantive Change to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
2. Submission of Proposal for Institutional (Programmatic) Consolidation or Merger to ACHE for review and approval. Note: It is the intention of the staff that the Prospectus for Substantive Change serve as the basis of the institution's Proposal for Institutional Consolidation.
3. Visit by SACS Substantive Change Committee.
4. Approval of change by SACS.

#### IV. Final Notifications

1. The consolidated or merged institution must notify ACHE by letter when SACS approval has been obtained.
2. The consolidated or merged institution must notify ACHE by letter when the United States Department of Education has recognized the merger. The National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) recognition of mergers for Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System's (IPEDS) purposes is dependent on Program Participation Agreement (PPA) approval by the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). The merged institution must notify ACHE by letter when OPE approves the PPA.

Adopted 09/24/04

## V. Data Reporting

1. If data reporting differences exist between the campuses at the time of the merger or consolidation, they must be identified and new procedures for reporting these data must be approved by the Commission as part of the regular ACHE review and approval process (ex: 50-mile radius, etc).
2. For the purposes of the Alabama Statewide Student Database reporting, data will continue to be reported separately until the next term reporting cycle after ACHE has approved the merger. For the purposes of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reporting, guidelines set by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) will be followed.
3. The ACHE staff will work with NCES to assign the institution its IPEDS reporting number upon completion of the merger process. The ACHE staff will notify the institution when this number has been assigned.

Adopted 09/24/04

## **II. GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE CONSOLIDATION OR MERGER OF TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS**

The guidelines for the review and approval of the consolidation or merger of two-year postsecondary institutions include three components:

1. Requirements Established by the Commission (Below)
2. Sequential Procedures (Attachment 1)
3. Concurrence with the State Board of Education's Resolution on Consolidation or Merger of Postsecondary Institutions. **Available upon request.**

### Requirements Established by the Commission:

The following specific requirements must be addressed in merger or consolidation proposals:

1. Proposed program exchanges, duplications, or relocations among the merged or consolidated institutions must be clearly identified in the proposals.
2. Additional programs, i.e. programs not existing on one or more of the campuses at the time of the merger or consolidation, must undergo the regular Commission review and approval process.
3. Documentation of specific educational benefits to be derived from the merger or consolidation must be presented with the Statement of Intent to Consolidate or Merge.
4. The merger or consolidation must be cost beneficial. Specifically, evidence must be presented that a reduction of administrative and other costs will result from the merger or consolidation. Both immediate and long-range savings must be presented.

Only those mergers or consolidations that are educationally and economically beneficial should be submitted to ACHE for consideration and approval.

## Attachment 1

### **Sequential Procedures for the Merger or Consolidation of Two-Year Colleges**

#### I. Statement of Intent Phase

1. The Chancellor of the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education (ADPE) presents a Statement of Intent to Consolidate or Merge two or more institutions to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) for review, comment, and approval.
2. The Chancellor of ADPE presents the Statement of Intent to Consolidate or Merge to the Alabama State Board of Education for approval.
3. Institutional notification of pending change to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

#### II. Administrative Consolidation Phase

1. The Chancellor of ADPE presents a formal request to ACHE for its approval of the administrative consolidation of the institutions.
2. The Chancellor of ADPE presents a resolution to the Alabama State Board of Education for approval of the administrative consolidation of the institutions.

#### III. Institutional (Programmatic) Consolidation or Merger Phase

1. Preparation and submission of Prospectus for Substantive Change to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
2. Visit by SACS Substantive Change Committee.
3. Approval of change by SACS.
4. Submission of Proposal for Institutional (Programmatic) Consolidation or Merger to ACHE for review and approval. Note: It is the intention of the staff that the Prospectus for Substantive Change serve as the basis of the institution's Proposal for Institutional Consolidation.
5. Final approval of the consolidation or merger by the Alabama State Board of Education.

#### IV. Final Notifications

Adopted 09/24/04

1. ADPE must notify ACHE by letter when SACS approval has been obtained.
2. ADPE must notify ACHE by letter when the United States Department of Education has recognized the merger. The National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) recognition of mergers for Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System's (IPEDS) purposes is dependent on Program Participation Agreement (PPA) approval by the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). ADPE must notify ACHE by letter when OPE approves the PPA.

#### V. Data Reporting

1. If data reporting differences exist between the campuses at the time of the merger or consolidation, they must be identified and new procedures for reporting these data must be approved by the Commission as part of the regular ACHE review and approval process (ex: 50-mile radius, etc).
2. For the purposes of the Alabama Statewide Student Database reporting, data will continue to be reported separately until the next term reporting cycle after ACHE has approved the merger. For the purposes of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reporting, guidelines set by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) will be followed.
3. The ACHE staff will work with NCES to assign the institution its IPEDS reporting number upon completion of the merger process. The ACHE staff will notify ADPE and the institution when this number has been assigned.

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